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ABSTRACT

Part 2 of the Alberta (Canada) Education's "Program of Studies for Elementary Schools 1978" (amended 1981), this bulletin describes the planned design, parts, and scoring of the grade six English language arts achievement test to be written in June 1988, and based on curriculum specifications for an integration of thinking and communications skills. The bulletin's first section discusses the purpose, nature, scope, methodology, and procedures for the achievement testing program. The second section describes the development and scoring of part A of the achievement test (composition), and provides a test blueprint, sample assignment, and scoring guides. The final section describes the development of part B (reading, multiple choice), and provides a blueprint of the reading exam, an explanation of cognitive levels under which questions are classified, sample reading selections and questions, and an answer key with a categorical description of each question. (JG)

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Student Achievement Testing Program Bulletin

GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

1987-88 School Year

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Bulletin

The Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test will be written on June 14, 1988. This bulletin provides specific information about the design, the parts, and the scoring of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test.

Teachers should also refer to the publication *Grade 6 English Language Arts Curriculum Specifications (1986)*, which presents the specific content and objectives that guide the development of the test questions.

Students should have access to the information in this bulletin, particularly to the sample assignment and sample questions, and to the scoring guides.

Questions or comments regarding this bulletin should be directed to:

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Purpose of the Achievement Testing Program

The Achievement Testing Program provides Alberta Education, school jurisdictions, and the public with information significant at the provincial and local levels about student knowledge, understanding, and skills in relation to program objectives. This program is not intended to provide information to be used for student placement or promotion.

The achievement tests are administered on a four-year cycle in four subject areas: language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science; and at three grade levels: 3, 6, and 9.

Nature of the Achievement Testing Program

The achievement tests are specific to the program of studies prescribed by the Minister of Education. Curriculum specifications for each subject area, provided by the Curriculum Branch and the Language Services Branch of Alberta Education, identify the major content areas, the specific learning objectives within each content area, and the emphasis that each objective is to receive. The test questions reflect these curriculum specifications.

Classroom teachers from across the province are extensively involved in developing and field testing the questions. The student responses are analysed after field testing to determine each question's discriminating power and level of difficulty. Questions may undergo several revisions before they appear on the achievement test.

The final draft of each test is examined by an Achievement Test Review Committee that includes representatives of The Alberta Teachers' Association, the Conference of Alberta School Superintendents, Alberta's post-secondary institutions, and Alberta Education.

Exemptions from the Achievement Testing Program

The results of the Achievement Testing Program are significant at the school jurisdiction level. All students who have been taught the subject being tested are expected to participate in the Achievement Testing Program. Any exceptions should be identified by the principal and approved by the superintendent of schools.

The only students who may be excused from participating are those for whom the test is inappropriate. That is:

1. Students who are enrolled in an approved program that has been designed for special needs students.
2. Students who were taught the subject being tested in another semester or year.
3. Students who are enrolled in an English as a Second Language program.
4. Students who are being taught the specific subject being tested (mathematics, science, or social studies) in a language other than English.

Note: All Grade 6 students are expected to write the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test in 1988.

Exemptions for reasons other than those outlined must be approved by the Director of the Student Evaluation and Records Branch.

Students Receiving Instruction in French

French language arts achievement tests and French translations of the mathematics, science, and social studies achievement tests are available for grades 6 and 9 according to the schedule on page 4. School jurisdictions that intend to have their students write achievement tests in French must notify Alberta Education prior to March 1, 1988.

Administration of the Achievement Testing Program

The Achievement Testing Program is administered in accordance with *Examination Regulation 531/82* pursuant to Section 11(1)(g) of the *School Act*. The achievement tests must be administered on the scheduled dates and may not be rescheduled.

The achievement tests should remain unopened until the time of administration. Duplication of any test materials, including the test booklets and answer sheets, is expressly forbidden.

Immediately following the administration of the scheduled achievement tests, the principal must ensure that test booklets and answer sheets are forwarded to school board offices. The school board is responsible for collecting and forwarding to the Student Evaluation and Records Branch all test materials containing students' responses. Further details regarding procedures for returning these materials to the Branch will be issued when the achievement tests are delivered. For private schools, the Regional Offices of Alberta Education assume responsibility for collecting and forwarding test materials to the Student Evaluation and Records Branch. All unused testing material may be retained by the school jurisdiction.

Alberta Education will supervise the scoring of all achievement tests. The scoring of achievement tests by school personnel prior to returning test materials to the Student Evaluation and Records Branch is a violation of the Examination Regulations and contrary to the intent of the Achievement Testing Program.

During 1988, the achievement tests will be administered according to the following schedule:

Tuesday, June 14, 1988 (Morning)

Grade 3 Social Studies

Grade 6 English Language Arts

Grade 9 Mathematics*

Thursday, June 16, 1988 (Morning)

Grade 6 French Language Arts

In 1989, the achievement tests will be administered according to the following schedule:

Tuesday, June 13, 1989 (Morning)

Grade 3 English Language Arts

Grade 6 Social Studies*

Grade 9 Science*

* A French translation of this test is available. The French translation must be administered at the same time as the English version.

Reporting the Achievement Test Results

In October 1988 a provincial report will be issued that will present the overall results for the province on major curriculum dimensions. Each jurisdiction will receive a district profile of student achievement to parallel the provincial report, as well as guidelines for interpreting the jurisdictional results in relation to provincial norms. Alberta Education will not issue individual statements of results to students; individual student profiles will be returned to superintendents.

Consistent with our current interim French Student Evaluation Policy, provincial reports will not be prepared for the French translations of the achievement tests or for the Grade 6 French Language Arts Achievement Test in 1988. Part A: Composition of the Grade 6 French Language Arts Achievement Test will be scored centrally according to the same procedures used to score Part A: Composition of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test.

Jurisdictions that choose to have their Francophone and/or French Immersion students write the Grade 6 French Language Arts Achievement Test and/or a French translation of the Mathematics 9 Achievement Test, will receive reports of jurisdiction and school results. Until the amount of time devoted to instruction in French is relatively uniform across the province, permitting valid and reliable interpretation of provincial data, provincial reports of achievement tests in French language programs will not be prepared.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACHIEVEMENT TEST

Following are the major points of information regarding the design of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test:

1. The Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test is designed to reflect the Grade 6 Language Arts curriculum specifications that have been developed from the *Program of Studies for Elementary Schools, 1978 (amended 1981)*.

2. The Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test is composed of two sections:

   Part A: Composition, to be administered during an 80-minute period on the morning of June 14, 1988.

   Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice), to be administered during a 1-hour period on the morning of June 14, 1988.

3. When writing Part A: Composition, students will write a story, the beginning of which appears in the test booklet. The person who administers the test will read the instructions aloud to students, but will NOT read the story starter.

4. The booklet for Part A: Composition includes pages labelled IDEAS/PLANNING, ROUGH DRAFT, and FINAL DRAFT. This format is designed to reflect the writing process model. Although specific marks for planning and drafting will not be allotted, markers will be advised to take planning and drafting into consideration when scoring student work.

5. Compositions will be scored for CONTENT, DEVELOPMENT, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, VOCABULARY, and CONVENTIONS (see scoring guides - pages 13 to 17).

6. Students may use an ENGLISH DICTIONARY while writing Part A of the test. No other type of dictionary is authorized.

7. Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) consists of 50 multiple-choice questions based on reading selections taken from fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. The projected test mean of Part B: Reading is 65%.

8. The booklet for Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) will contain reading selections and questions. Answers will be recorded on a separate machine-scorable answer sheet.

9. Students may NOT use a dictionary while writing Part B.

PART A: COMPOSITION

Part A: Composition is designed to encourage narrative and descriptive writing.

The blueprint of Part A: Composition (page 10) is followed by a sample assignment for classroom use. This sample assignment illustrates the kind of writing assignment that will appear on the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test in June 1988.

Scoring guides follow on pages 13 to 17. Teachers should discuss the sample assignments and scoring guides with their students, keeping in mind that the scoring guides are written for teachers. Consequently, technical terms will require explanation.

Development of Part A: Composition

Test developers and teacher committees observed the following general guidelines as they developed the writing assignment and scoring guides for the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test:

1. The writing assignment and scoring guides should assess skills presented in the curriculum specifications for Grade 6 English Language Arts that were developed from the *Program of Studies for Elementary Schools 1978 (amended 1981)*.

2. The assignment and test format should reflect the writing process model of prewriting (thinking and planning), writing, and revision.

3. The assignment statement should provide focus. An assignment that is too general is to be avoided.

4. The story starter should be constructed so that it provides a context and identifiable characters, but it must be broad enough in scope to encourage a wide range of approaches.

5. The assignment should be one that can be completed in a period of 80 minutes, allowing some time for planning, drafting, and revision.

Scoring of Part A: Composition

Selection of Markers

Part A: Composition will be scored by Grade 6 teachers selected from those who have been recommended as markers to the Student Evaluation and Records Branch by their superintendents. To qualify for recommendation by a superintendent, a prospective marker must already have taught Grade 6 English Language Arts for two or more years, currently be teaching Grade 6 English Language Arts, and have a valid permanent Alberta teaching certificate.

Superintendents will be contacted in October 1987 for their recommendations. Approximately 150 teachers will be selected on superintendents' recommendations in order to ensure that there is a proportional representation from the various regions of Alberta. Markers will be contacted in April or May. The list of markers will be finalized no later than June 16, 1988.

Many more teachers are recommended as markers by superintendents than are required by the Student Evaluation and Records Branch. The following criteria are considered when markers are selected for the marking session:

- Experience as a Marker (generally, "first time" markers are given priority)
- Regional Representation (by zone, jurisdiction, and school)
- Student Population

Dates for Scoring

Part A: Composition will be scored in Edmonton during the week of July 18 to 23, 1988. Group leaders will meet on Monday, July 18, 1988.

Scoring Procedures

Markers will be trained in the application of scoring guides, and sample papers will be discussed prior to the actual scoring of Part A. Consistency in scoring will be monitored closely.

Each student's paper will be scored by one marker only. The one-marker system allows reliable results to be reported at the jurisdictional and provincial levels, but not at the individual student level. At the time of scoring, the markers will be instructed to focus upon the success of a student's writing within each scoring category. Work in the planning and drafting space will be considered in the event that the student's paper includes incomplete revised work.

Scoring Guides

The scoring guides are on pages 13 to 17. Prior to scoring, minor adjustments to the scoring guides may be made in order to reflect students' actual performance as determined by teachers reading a random sample of the test papers, and by group leaders in their pre-scoring meeting.

Blueprint for Part A: Composition

The blueprint that follows on page 10 outlines Part A of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test. The blueprint delineates the categories under which summary data will be reported to school jurisdictions.

Part A: Composition
Blueprint
Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test

REPORTING CATEGORY (Scoring Guide)	DESCRIPTION OF WRITING ASSIGNMENT	RANGE OF MARKS
CONTENT (Selecting details to achieve a purpose) Events and/or actions should be plausible and appropriate to the student's purpose for communicating. The student should be able to select details to describe characters and setting that are appropriate within the context or terms of reference established by the student. **DEVELOPMENT** (Organizing details into a coherent whole) The student should be able to place events in a coherent sequence. **SENTENCE STRUCTURE** (Structuring sentences effectively) The student should be able to use a variety of sentence structures effectively in writing. **VOCABULARY** (Selecting and using words and expressions correctly and effectively) The student should be able to use words and expressions effectively in writing. **CONVENTIONS** (Using the conventions of language correctly and effectively) The student should be able to communicate clearly in writing by adhering to appropriate spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.	The writing assignment follows a story starter that is to be read by each student. The assignment sets a specific task, but allows the student to be imaginative in selecting details, actions, and events.	5 - Excellent 4 - Proficient 3 - Satisfactory 2 - Limited 1 - Poor INS - Insufficient

Part A: Composition Sample Assignment

The sample assignment and instructions that follow are similar in format and content to those that will be presented in the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- In this test you are asked to write a story.
- If you want to write down your ideas AND/OR make a plan before you write your story, do so on the IDEAS/PLANNING page.
- If you want to do a first draft of your story, do so on the pages labelled FIRST DRAFT.
- Write your final draft on the pages labelled FINAL DRAFT.
- Remember that you may make changes and corrections on your final draft.
- Your story will be evaluated on WHAT you say and HOW WELL you say it (on CONTENT, DEVELOPMENT, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, VOCABULARY, and CONVENTIONS).
- You may use an ENGLISH DICTIONARY.
- You have 80 minutes to complete this test.

The following is the beginning of a story. After you have read it, continue and finish the story.

Laura and Larry were very uncomfortable. This heat wave was getting to them. What they really needed was a cool swim. They jumped on their bikes and headed down the dusty road towards Amber Lake. Although the day was hot, dark clouds threatened on the horizon.

They were only halfway to the lake when the clouds opened up and pelted them with rain. "Larry," Laura called ahead to her brother. "let's go back to that old house we passed and wait out the storm. My bike wheels are clogging up with mud and I'm soaking wet!"

"That place!," exclaimed Larry. "Nobody lives there!"

"Well, I'm going!" shouted Laura...

Scoring Guides Part A: Composition

REPORTING CATEGORY: CONTENT

Selecting details to achieve a purpose

Details chosen by the student may be descriptive details associated with characters or setting OR narrative details associated with actions or events.

SCORE	DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE	
5	EXCELLENT	Events and/or actions are plausible within the context established by the writer. Events and/or actions are consistent with atmosphere and character motivation. Specific details describe characters physically, and clearly indicate OR suggest their motives. Specific details describe the setting and create and sustain atmosphere or mood.
4	PROFICIENT	Events and/or actions are plausible within the context established by the writer. Events and/or actions are connected to character motivation. Appropriate details describe characters clearly and hint at their motives. Details describing the setting may create, but do not sustain, atmosphere or mood.
3	SATISFACTORY	Events and/or actions are plausible within the context established by the writer although credibility may occasionally falter, OR events and/or actions are conventional and predictable. Appropriate but generalized details describe characters and setting(s). Details that clarify motivation or establish mood may be imprecise or absent.
2	LIMITED	Events and/or actions are generally plausible within the writer's context, but many events or actions lack credibility, OR events and/or actions are predictable yet vaguely described.
1	POOR	Events and/or actions may be generally plausible, OR they may be presented in a confusing manner. Appropriate details that describe character and setting are lacking. Details that are present confuse rather than clarify the action, characters, and/or setting.
INS	INSUFFICIENT	The student has written so little that it is not possible to assess the content.

REPORTING CATEGORY: DEVELOPMENT

Organizing details into a coherent whole

SCORE	DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE	
5	EXCELLENT	Events and/or actions are ordered in a coherent sequence and are ordered for effect. Suspense may be developed. Details describing characters and setting are skilfully connected to the story's action. The story's ending conveys an appropriate sense of closure.
4	PROFICIENT	Events and/or actions are ordered in a coherent sequence. Suspense may be attempted. Details describing characters and setting are clearly connected to the story's action. A sense of closure is achieved.
3	SATISFACTORY	Events and/or actions are ordered in a generally coherent sequence. Details describing characters and setting may seem to be included as afterthoughts BUT do not act as a disorganizing influence. A sense of closure is attempted.
2	LIMITED	A sequencing of events and/or actions can be detected, BUT coherence is not achieved. Details describing characters and/or setting are not connected to the story's action. A sense of closure is absent, OR if closure is attempted, it is inappropriate or jarringly abrupt.
1	POOR	Sequencing of events is not discernible. The presentation is confusing. A sense of closure is absent, inappropriate, or abrupt.

REPORTING CATEGORY: SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Structuring sentences effectively

SCORE	DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE	
5	EXCELLENT	Sentence construction is effectively and consistently controlled. Sentence type and length are effective and varied. Co-ordination has been controlled, and subordination is used appropriately. Sentence fragments, if used, are used successfully for effect.
4	PROFICIENT	Sentence construction is controlled. Sentence type and length are often effective and varied. Co-ordination may be present but is not over-used. Subordination has been successfully attempted. Sentence fragments and/or run-on sentences, if used, are used for effect and do not impede clarity.
3	SATISFACTORY	Sentence construction is generally controlled. Sentence type and length are sometimes varied for effect although co-ordination may be over-used. Subordination may be present. Run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, occasionally impede clarity.
2	LIMITED	Sentence construction sometimes lacks control. Sentence type and length are rarely varied and/or an overdependence on co-ordination is demonstrated. Subordination, if used, is inappropriate or uncontrolled. Sentence fragments and/or run-on sentences are frequently used and impede clarity.
1	POOR	Sentence construction generally lacks control. Sentence type, length, and structure is immature and repetitious in pattern. Co-ordination has been used repeatedly. Sentence fragments and/or run-on sentences are common and severely impede clarity.

REPORTING CATEGORY: VOCABULARY

Using effective words and expressions

SCORE	DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE	
5	EXCELLENT	Specific words and expressions are carefully selected to create vivid images and/or to create clear and precise details. Words are used accurately and effectively.
4	PROFICIENT	Specific words and expressions are frequently used and show some evidence of careful selection to create images and/or to add clarity to details. Words are used accurately and often effectively.
3	SATISFACTORY	Specific words and expressions are occasionally used to add clarity to images and details, but general words are more apparent. Words are generally used accurately.
2	LIM.TED	General words and expressions are frequently used where specific words and expressions would have been more effective. Specific words, if present, may be used inappropriately.
1	POOR	General or vague words and expressions predominate. Choice of words is restricted.

REPORTING CATEGORY: CONVENTIONS

Using the conventions of language correctly and effectively

SCORE	DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE	
5	EXCELLENT	The quality of writing is enhanced because of consistently correct capitalization, spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Errors are seldom present and do not affect the clarity of the communication.
4	PROFICIENT	The quality of writing is reinforced because of essentially correct capitalization, spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Errors that are occasionally present do not affect the clarity of the communication.
3	SATISFACTORY	The quality of writing is adequate because of generally correct capitalization, spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Errors that are present sometimes affect the clarity of the communication.
2	LIMITED	The quality of writing is reduced because of generally incorrect capitalization, spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Errors that are present often affect the clarity of the communication.
1	POOR	The quality of writing is weak because of consistently incorrect capitalization, spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Errors that are present severely affect the clarity of the communication.

PART B: READING (MULTIPLE CHOICE)

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) in the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test consists of 50 multiple-choice questions based on reading selections from fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.

The achievement test blueprint for Part B: Reading (page 20) is followed by sample questions. These questions illustrate the nature and complexity of questions that appear on the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test. They do not, however, reflect the exact emphases indicated in the achievement test blueprint (page 20) or the projected achievement test mean (page 6). The key and question information for the sample questions are on pages 34 and 35, and the blueprint for the sample questions is on page 36.

Development of Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)

Reading selections were chosen according to the following general guidelines:

- Reading selections, whenever possible, should be relatively short, but should be complete works containing a beginning, middle, and end.
- Reading selections should reflect the interests of the majority of Grade 6 students.
- Reading selections should be of appropriate difficulty for Grade 6 students.
- Canadian content should be used extensively.

The following guidelines provided direction for question development:

- Questions related to each reading selection should be arranged from least to most difficult or from specific to general, whenever practical.
- Questions should test the student's ability to understand and analyse the reading selections and to make judgments about their form and content. Only questions dealing with significant aspects of the reading selections should be asked.
- The multiple-choice test blueprint must be based on the curriculum specifications for Grade 6 Language Arts that were developed from the *Program of Studies for Elementary Schools* 1978 (amended 1981).

Blueprint for Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice)

The blueprint for Part B: Reading (page 20) shows the reporting categories and cognitive levels under which questions are classified, and indicates the number of questions in each category. A minimum of six questions will be classified under each reporting category so that meaningful results of student achievement can be reported.

Part B: Reading
Blueprint
Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test

REPORTING CATEGORY	CURRICULUM SPECIFICATIONS REFERENCE	PROCESS CATEGORIES*			TOTALS	
		LITERAL	INFERENTIAL	EVALUATIVE	NO. OF QUESTIONS**	% OF TEST**
1 IDENTIFYING THE ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS The student should be able to attend to and analyse elements of the author's organization such as: sequence, purpose, comparison, cause/effect, and imagery in a reading selection.	I.,A.,9,13,14 II.,A.,5,8,10 II.,B.3 III.,B.,1 IV.,A.,1,2,3 V.,A.,2				10	20%
2 ANALYSING DETAILS The student should be able to attend to and analyse the inter-relationship of the details in a reading selection.	I.,A.,2,9,11 II.,A.,2,7 II.,B.,3				20	40%
3 ASSOCIATING MEANINGS The student should be able to associate meanings of words and expressions in context, and evaluate appro-priateness of word choice.	I.,A.,3 II.,A.,3 II.,B.,2 IV.,B.,1				10	20%
4 SYNTHESIZING IDEAS The student should be able to synthesize the information within the reading selection in order to construct meaning. The student should be able to synthesize ideas from the entire reading selection in order to deduce the main idea and to predict plausible outcomes or conclusions.	I.,A.,1 II.,A.,1,7 II.,B.,3 II.,C.,1 II.,D.,1,2 IV.,A.,1,2,3				10	20%
NO. OF QUESTIONS** % OF TEST**		6-8 15%	30 60%	11-13 25%	50	100%

* The boxes under PROCESS CATEGORIES are empty since numbers of questions will vary depending upon the reading selections chosen to appear on the achievement test. An example of a completed blueprint is on page 36.

** All numbers and percentages are approximate and will vary depending upon selections chosen.

Explanation of Process Categories

- **Literal Understanding**

  When answering questions listed in the blueprint under Literal Understanding, the student is required to identify or to remember, either by recall or recognition, supporting details and cause-and-effect relationships that are directly stated in reading selections. When answering vocabulary questions listed under Literal Understanding, the student is required to recall word meanings.

- **Inferential Understanding**

  When answering questions listed in the blueprint under Inferential Understanding, the student is required to understand, through analysis, interpretation, and extrapolation, the meanings, details, and relationships that are implied in reading selections.

- **Evaluation**

  When answering questions listed in the blueprint under Evaluation, the student is required to make judgments about the relative importance or value of the alternatives present in the question.

  Students must select the BEST answer when answering evaluation questions. In such questions each alternative has a measure of truth. The student must evaluate the alternatives in the context of the reading selection in order to select the BEST answer.

The Part B: Reading sample test of 28 questions follows on pages 22 to 33. The key, question description, and blueprint for the sample test follow on pages 34 to 36.

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) Sample Reading Selections and Sample Questions

I. Read "The Blue Bear Rug" below and answer questions 1 to 5.

The Blue Bear Rug

A snow storm blew around a small cabin in the woods. Inside, two mountain men sat near a fireplace. Jake said, "Looks like I'll be here for a while."

"Sure does," replied Jeb.

Jake stroked his beard and took a puff from his pipe. "It's not the worst storm I've ever seen. Did I ever tell you about my blue bear rug?" he asked.

"Blue bear? There ain't no such animal."

"There is too. I was hunting way up north and it was so cold that anything that stopped moving froze solid. Well, sure enough, there was this one polar bear that was frozen stiff. He was so cold that he turned blue. Why, I had to thaw him out over a fire before I could shoot him. Then I froze him up again and waited for summer and made a rug out of him. And he was still blue. What do you think of that?"

Jeb stared at him, then he leaned back deep in his chair. "That was sure cold," he said. "But it wasn't as cold as the time I went hunting up north."

"How's that?"

"It was so cold that even the polar bears couldn't stand it. I came across fifty or so of them all huddled together one on top of the other. Looked like a fur igloo."

"One winter, when you weren't here, it was so bad the clouds didn't float properly. They were just above the trees, and sometimes a real heavy cloud would come along and snap the tips off the pinetrees. I used to wake up in the middle of the night because of the noise. What a racket those clouds used to make."

"Big deal!" snorted Jeb.

Jake shook the ashes from his pipe into the fireplace. "The storm has let up. I'd better be going." As he dressed, he said, "Jeb, one winter it was so cold that I was frozen stiff all winter and I don't remember a thing."

He headed for the door.

As he walked into the forest, Jeb yelled after him, "You were frozen for five winters, Jake, not one."

"Why five?"

"Of course Jake, you don't remember, but that was the time the whole North Pole froze solid. I had to climb up on top and dig away the ice. Took me five years!"

Jake said nothing, but started walking again. Suddenly he stopped. "I should have told him about the time I saw ice shivering. Now that was cold!"

He continued walking.

Frank R. Collins

1. The men's stories can be described as tall tales because they are

   A. exaggerated
   B. mysterious
   C. exciting
   D. amusing

2. In the men's conversation the first tall tale begins when

   A. Jeb digs into the ice
   B. Jeb sees the polar bears
   C. Jake goes on a hunting trip
   D. Jake talks about the blue rug

3. The expression that suggests that one of the men becomes impatient with the other is

   A. "Sure does." (line 4)
   B. "How's that?" (line 18)
   C. "Big deal!" (line 27)
   D. "Why five?" (line 35)

4. Jeb yells, "You were frozen for five winters, Jake, not one" (lines 33-34) because Jeb

   A. believes that Jake wasn't snowbound
   B. is sure that Jake won't remember the event
   C. does not want to let Jake have the last say
   D. believes that Jake should improve his story-telling

5. Jake's MOST LIKELY reason for not telling Jeb about the "ice shivering" (line 40) is that Jake

   A. thinks that Jeb will not believe the story
   B. does not think of the story soon enough
   C. is eager to continue his journey
   D. does not want to talk any more

II. Read "The First Look" below and answer questions 6 to 10.

The First Look

Two astronauts are about to take the first steps of mankind on the moon. While millions watch on television, we hear Commander Armstrong say:

ARMSTRONG: Houston, Tranquillity Base here. The Eagle has landed.

MISSION CONTROL: Roger, Tranquillity, we copy you on the ground. You've got a bunch of guys about to turn blue here. Now we're breathing again. . . .Thanks a lot. . . .Okay, Neil, we can see you coming down the ladder now.

ARMSTRONG: I'm at the foot of the ladder. The lunar module foot pads are only depressed in the surface about one or two inches, although the surface appears to be very, very fine-grained, as you get close to it. It's almost like powder.

. . . . .

ARMSTRONG: Isn't that something. Magnificent.

ALDRIN: Beautiful, beautiful.

ARMSTRONG: The surface is fine and powdery. I can -- I can pick it up loosely with my toe. It does adhere in fine layers like powdered charcoal to the sole and sides of my boots. I only go in a small fraction of an inch. Maybe an eighth of an inch, but I can see the footprints of my boots and the treads in the fine, sandy particles.

John Norton

6. What is Armstrong's first name?

   A. Neil
   B. Roger
   C. Eagle
   D. Houston

7. What does the speaker from Mission Control mean when he says, "You've got a bunch of guys about to turn blue here" (lines 2-3)?

   A. Mission Control is worried.
   B. It is very cold on the moon.
   C. Mission Control base is very cold.
   D. Armstrong's oxygen supply is running low.

8. How do we know that the sub-surface of the moon must be firm?

   A. It freezes solid during the night.
   B. It is made of fine-grained material.
   C. It supports the weight of the lunar module.
   D. It is composed of layers of powdered material.

9. When Armstrong says that the powdery surface of the moon "adheres" (line 14) to his boots, he means that it

   A. hardens
   B. sticks
   C. moves
   D. rubs

10. According to Armstrong, the surface of the moon is composed of

   A. small treads
   B. powdered charcoal
   C. shallow depressions
   D. fine, sandy particles

III. Read "That Cat" below and answer questions 11 to 14.

That Cat

The cat that comes to my window sill
When the moon looks cold and the night is still --
He comes in a frenzied state alone
With a tail that stands like a pine tree cone.
And says: "I have finished my evening lark.
And I think I can hear a hound dog bark.
My whiskers are froze 'nd stuck to my chin.
I do wish you'd get up and let me in."
That cat gets in.

But if in the solitude of the night
He doesn't appear to be feeling right,
And rises and stretches and seeks the floor,
And some remote corner he would explore,
And doesn't feel satisfied just because
There's no good spot for to sharpen his claws,
And meows and canters uneasy about
Beyond the last shadow of any doubt
That cat gets out.

Ben King

11. Who is telling us about the cat in this poem?

A. The cat
B. A visitor
C. A neighbor
D. The cat's owner

12. The second stanza MAINLY describes the cat's

A. loneliness
B. appearance
C. restlessness
D. satisfaction

13. What line in the poem BEST explains why the cat gets out?

A. "In the solitude of the night" (line 10)
B. "Rises and stretches and seeks the floor" (line 12)
C. "Some remote corner he would explore" (line 13)
D. "Meows and canters uneasy about" (line 16)

14. What is the MAIN idea of this poem?

A. The cat gets what he wants.
B. The cat gets cold outside.
C. The cat needs exercise.
D. The cat stays inside.

IV. Read the story and answer questions 15 to 19.

A Piece of Debris

On the Sunday afternoon that the beaver dam broke, Helvi Nurmi was down by the river, skipping flat stones across the water, and wishing that she had a companion. It was difficult to be entirely fair in a competition always held against herself. The river bank was steep and high here, so she was quite safe when a rushing torrent of water swept past. She stood watching, when her eye was caught by a piece of debris that had been whirling around in a back eddy and was now lodged in some boulders at the edge of the bank. She could see what looked like a small, limp body on the surface. She ran along by the boiling water to investigate, scrambling down the bank, to stand looking with pity at the wet, bedraggled body, wondering what it was, for she had never seen anything like it before. She dragged the mass of twigs and branches further up on land, then ran to call her mother.

Mrs. Nurmi was out in the yard by an old wood stove which she still used for boiling the vegetable dyes for her weaving, or peelings and scraps for the hens. She followed Helvi, calling out to her husband to come and see this strange animal washed up by an unfamiliar, swift-surging river.

He came, with his unhurried countryman's walk and quiet thoughtful face, and joined the others to look down in silence at the small limp body, the darkly plastered fur betraying its slightness, the frail skull bones and thin crooked tail mercilessly exposed. Suddenly he bent down and laid his hand lightly on it for a moment, then pulled back the skin above and below one eye and looked more closely. He turned and saw Helvi's anxious, questioning face close to his own, and beyond that of her mother's. "Is a drowned cat worth trying to save?" he asked them, and when her mother nodded, before Helvi's pleading eyes, he said no more. But scooped the soaking bundle up and walked back to the cabin, telling Helvi to run ahead and bring some dry sacks.

Sheila Burnford

15. Why doesn't Helvi know what the "wet, bedraggled body" (line 11) is?

A. The animal has wet, matted fur.
B. The animal is stuck in a back eddy.
C. She is too busy skipping flat stones.
D. She has never seen anything like it before.

16. The words in the passage that first suggest Helvi's kindness are

A. "wishing that she had a companion" (lines 2-3)
B. "looking with pity" (line 10)
C. "dragged the mass of twigs and branches" (line 12)
D. "ran to call her mother" (line 13)

17. When the father comes to the scene (lines 19-20), his first reaction is

A. sadness
B. calmness
C. hostility
D. curiosity

18. Helvi's "pleading eyes" (line 27) indicate that she

A. has stopped worrying
B. wants to help the cat
C. agrees with her mother
D. is worried about her father

19. When Helvi's father tells her to "run ahead and bring some dry sacks" (line 29), he is suggesting that he

A. will make an effort to save the cat
B. wants Helvi to get on with her chores
C. wants to collect the twigs and branches
D. thinks the effort to save the cat is hopeless

V. Read the biography below and answer questions 20 to 24.

Mother Teresa

Agnes Bojaxhiu was born in a town in Yugoslavia on August 27, 1910. When Agnes was twelve, she wanted to become a missionary. When she was eighteen, she left Yugoslavia to join the Loreto nuns in India. In Calcutta, India, Agnes taught geography and history at a high school run by the nuns. In 1936 she became a nun herself, promising to love God, to live a simple life, and to obey God. She chose Teresa for her new name as a nun; Teresa means "little one" and she was the smallest nun in the convent.

After Sister Teresa taught for many years she became the school principal and was known as Mother Teresa.

In time, Mother Teresa grew restless in the school and the convent because she felt she was more needed on the streets by the homeless, the sick and the dying. She received permission to leave the convent and live among the poor. She had no money, no place to sleep, no friends. Mother Teresa realized that to care for the sick she needed medical training, so she spent the first months at a hospital learning the skills of nursing.

Mother Teresa started her first school and her work of caring for the sick in the slums of Calcutta. In the midst of this huge task that she had set for herself, the first person to knock on Mother Teresa's door and offer herself as Mother Teresa's helpmate was one of her high school students. As the news spread of Mother Teresa's work, more and more young women came to join her in serving the poor.

Often Mother Teresa stayed up late into the night writing the constitution that stated the purpose and beliefs of Mother Teresa and her nuns. "We are called the Missionaries of Charity", wrote Mother Teresa. "A Missionary of Charity must be a missionary of love. She must be full of love in her own soul and spread that same love to the souls of others."

Mother Teresa has won many awards for her service to the poor. In 1979 she won the world famous Nobel Peace Prize. She flew to Norway to accept the award. She did not give a long speech. These were her words. "I am very happy to receive it. In the name of the hungry, of the homeless, of the crippled, for all those people who feel unwanted and unloved -- the throwaways of society. In their name I accept the award."

Adapted by L. M. Campbell

20. The childhood wish that Mother Teresa made come true was

A. becoming a nurse
B. winning many awards
C. teaching high school
D. becoming a missionary

21. Mother Teresa left the school and the convent because

A. she wanted adventure
B. she was tired of teaching
C. she wanted to help the poor
D. she wanted to become a doctor

22. When Mother Teresa set out with "no money, no place to sleep, no friends" (line 14) she was MOST CLEARLY illustrating her

A. impatience
B. poverty
C. courage
D. wisdom

23. When Mother Teresa left the school and the convent the first thing she did was

A. write a constitution
B. get further training
C. set up a school
D. feed the poor

24. For Mother Teresa, the MOST IMPORTANT quality of her missionaries is

A. generosity
B. poverty
C. duty
D. love

VI. Read the poem below and answer questions 25 to 28.

The Builders

I told them a thousand times if I told them once;
Stop fooling around, I said, with straw and sticks;
They won't hold up; you're taking an awful chance.
Brick is the stuff to build with, solid bricks.
You want to be impractical, go ahead.
But just remember, I told them; wait and see.
You're making a big mistake. Awright, I said,
But when the wolf comes, don't come running to me.

The funny thing is, they didn't. There they sat,
One in his crummy yellow shack, and one
Under his roof of twigs, and the wolf ate
Them, hair and hide. Well, what is done is done.
But I'd been willing to help them, all along,
If only they'd once admitted they were wrong.

Sara Henderson Hay

25. The expression "I told them a thousand times if I told them once" (line 1) means that the speaker in the poem

A. stopped advising the others
B. advised the others one time only
C. often repeated his advice to others
D. seldom repeated his advice to others

26. A more formal word to replace "crummy," as it is used in line 10, is

A. flimsy
B. little
C. costly
D. weathered

27. The personalities of the builders who used straw and twigs are BEST described as being

A. easily persuaded
B. eager to please
C. independent
D. aggressive

28. The builder who advised using bricks is BEST described as being

A. proud
B. generous
C. disappointed
D. understanding

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) Sample Questions - Key and Description

Question No.	Keyed Response	Difficulty Level*	Reporting Category**	Cognitive Level	Curriculum Specification
1	A	.835	Identifying Org. of Ideas	Inferential	II A 10
2	D	.735	Identifying Org. of Ideas	Inferential	II A 10
3	C	.772	Associating Meanings	Literal	I A 11
4	C	.400	Analysing Details	Inferential	II A 2
5	B	.321	Synthesizing Ideas	Evaluative	II D 1
6	A	.726	Analysing Details	Literal	I A 2
7	A	.528	Associating Meanings	Inferential	II B 2
8	C	.384	Synthesizing Ideas	Inferential	II D 2
9	B	.564	Associating Meanings	Inferential	II A 3
10	D	.511	Analysing Details	Literal	I A 2
11	D	.570	Analysing Details	Inferential	II A 10
12	C	.482	Synthesizing Ideas	Evaluative	II D 1
13	D	.651	Associating Meanings	Evaluative	II A 7
14	A	.733	Synthesizing Ideas	Evaluative	II D 1
15	D	.739	Analysing Details	Literal	I A 9

Question No.	Keyed Response	Difficulty Level*	Reporting Category**	Cognitive Level	Curriculum Specification
16	B	.459	Associating Meanings	Inferential	II A 2
17	B	.479	Analysing Details	Inferential	II A 2
18	B	.710	Identifying Org. of Ideas	Inferential	II A 10
19	A	.720	Synthesizing Ideas	Inferential	II C 1
20	D	.804	Analysing Details	Inferential	II A 2
21	C	.846	Identifying Org. of Ideas	Literal	I A 9
22	C	.556	Synthesizing Ideas	Evaluative	II D 2
23	B	.644	Analysing Details	Literal	I A 9
24	D	.825	Analysing Details	Evaluative	II A 7
25	C	.777	Identifying Org. of Ideas	Inferential	II A 10
26	A	.781	Associating Meanings	Inferential	II A 3
27	C	.482	Identifying Org. of Ideas	Evaluative	II B 3
28	A	.442	Identifying Org. of Ideas	Evaluative	II B 3

* The difficulty level of the question indicates the percentage of students who answered the question correctly on a pilot test, or an estimate of difficulty if the question has been revised.

** See the blueprint on page 20 for a description of each reporting category. In evaluation questions, each alternative must have a measure of truth. One alternative, however, will provide the BEST answer.

Part B: Reading
Blueprint
(Sample Questions)

REPORTING CATEGORY	CURRICULUM SPECIFICATIONS REFERENCE	PROCESSES			NO. OF QUESTIONS	% OF TEST
		LITERAL	INFERENTIAL	EVALUATIVE		
1 IDENTIFYING THE ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS The student should be able to attend to and analyse elements of the author's organization such as: sequence, purpose, comparison, cause/effect, and imagery in a reading selection.	I.,A.,9,11,14 II.,A.,5,8,10 II.,B.3 III.,B.,1 IV.,A.,1,2,3 V.,A.,2	21	1,2,18, 25	27,28	7	25
2 ANALYSING DETAILS The student should be able to attend to and analyse the inter-relationship of the details in a reading selection.	I.,A.,2,9,11 II.,A.,2,7 II.,B.,3	6,10,15, 23	4,11,17, 20	24	9	33
3 ASSOCIATING MEANINGS The student should be able to associate meanings of words and expressions in context, and evaluate appro-priateness of word choice.	I.,A.,3 II.,A.,3 II.,B.,2 IV.,B.,1	3	7,9,16, 26	13	6	21
4 SYNTHESIZING IDEAS The student should be able to synthesize the information within the reading selection in order to construct meaning. The student should be able to synthesize ideas from the entire reading selection in order to deduce the main idea and to predict plausible outcomes or conclusions.	I.,A.,1 II.,A.,1,7 II.,B.,3 II.,C.,1 II.,D.,1,2 IV.,A.,1,2,3		8,19	5,12,14, 22	6	21
NO. OF QUESTIONS % OF TEST		6 21	14 50	8 29	28	100%

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